

CHAPTER 7

GETTING YOURSELF READY TO CAST THE DEMON OUT

Finally getting started with deliverance once all the preparation of the person has been done

When you feel satisfied that the person is truly saved and has cooperated with all the preparatory stages they need to go through, such that they have genuinely repented, forgiven other people, renounced the occult, idolatry and false religion and sought to break the curses over their life, then you are ready to meet up to cast the demon(s) out.

Therefore, arrange a meeting in a quiet, comfortable, private room such as a living room where you can have peace and privacy and where you won't be overheard. It is important as well, unless you are very experienced and mature, or if it is an emergency, to get at least one other person to join with you. Indeed, I would say it is virtually essential because deliverance can take hours and be very exhausting and you need someone to take over the job while you take a break.

They can also give you prayer support and possibly physical support and protection as well in case things get nasty, which they can sometimes do. However, the situation need not get out of control if you handle things in the right way. Certainly, it is not something to be afraid of, if you act sensibly and remain biblical in what you do and say.

The demons would like you to fear them. That would suit their purposes perfectly. Therefore, don't cooperate with that wish. Just refuse to be afraid, or at least refuse to act on your fears. Therefore, carry on doing what needs to be done while still being afraid. That is often the only way to overcome fear.

That said, it is wise to choose a room which doesn't contain any knives or other things that could be thrown or used as weapons. So check the room first and remove anything that could be used by the person if they were to 'manifest' or become enraged or violent. There is no lack of faith involved in taking such sensible precautions.

If the person seeking deliverance is male then it would be alright to have just men present. But if it's a woman it is essential to have at least one, preferably two, women as well assisting you, praying for you, giving advice and also operating as chaperones. A chaperone is needed not only to safeguard the person you are ministering to but also to protect you from false allegations of abuse or misconduct afterwards.

Remember, demonised people have demons inside them and are therefore inherently unpredictable and deceitful. Therefore, if things don't go well and the person becomes hostile, because the demons haven't left, you can quickly become the target not only for possible violence but also for lies to be told about you. So you absolutely must have one or more female witnesses present if ministering to a female.

By the way, I was asked whether it is possible for women to carry out deliverance ministry on their own with no men present, i.e. when they are dealing only with women. I see no reason why they should not. When Jesus sent out the 12 apostles and then the 70 disciples they were all men, but that does not, in itself, mean that women can't engage in this ministry.

Remember, in Mark 16 when Jesus spoke of what His followers would do, including casting out demons, He only spoke of “....*those who believe*....” and did not specify that they must be male. So, although a woman cannot lead a church, or have authority to teach men, I see no reason why she can’t exercise the authority to cast out demons, *provided she is dealing only with women*.

Make sure the person actually wants to be delivered

If the deliverance is going to be successful it is essential that the person you are seeking to help *actually wants to be delivered*. That may sound like an odd thing to say, as you might assume that every demonised person obviously wants to be set free of the demons and to have them cast out. But I don’t believe that is so. At least it has not been the case in my experience.

Very often they do *not* want the demons to go, even if they don’t say that explicitly in so many words. You can discern this from their attitude, their lack of interest, and their unwillingness to take all the preparatory steps, or even to meet with you at all. Basically, your enthusiasm to help them may greatly exceed their enthusiasm, or even willingness, to be helped. That may seem odd to you, but it is often the case.

It is rather like the position with battered wives who have been beaten by their husband. When I was a brand new police officer I was advised by my tutor constable to beware of doing the paperwork too soon in the case of a wife complaining about her husband. He said that on the Saturday night when she gets hit by her drunken husband she is motivated to report it and he then gets arrested and spends the night in the cells.

But on the Sunday or Monday morning, she will tell you she no longer wants to prosecute. Therefore, any paperwork you have done will not be used. You might wonder why these women don’t want to prosecute their abusive husbands, but they have all sorts of reasons. Some are passive. Some are afraid. Some believe the husband’s promise not to do it again. And so on.

The point is when you are dealing with demonised people you will find many of them will resist you. They will also avoid dealing with issues, create delays, have all sorts of doubts as to whether there really is a demon, or just prefer to keep things as they are. So don’t be surprised when this happens.

Remember the person currently has one or more demons inside them and those demons will be working overtime to persuade them not to cooperate with you, or to delay things, or even to become hostile towards you. This is all very common. Indeed, it is the norm and you should be ready for it.

You should also be fully expecting the person to hear thoughts in their head, which they assume to be their own thoughts, which are hostile, critical or accusing towards you. It is a standard tactic on the demon’s part to get the person *to distrust you*, to be suspicious of you or to believe you have wronged them or insulted them or are seeking to exploit or control them and so on.

The demons will seek to accuse you of anything they possibly can and will work hard to try to get the person to believe it so they cease to cooperate with the deliverance ministry. It is the oldest trick in the book, but it often works and the demons know that better than anyone. So anticipate dirty tricks and fully expect the person to hear lies in their head about you and also about themselves.

I can think of one lady, “Tania” who said during the deliverance time, and in a deep man’s voice “*I hate you*” and she looked at me with hostility as the demon said this through her. I just commanded the

demon to be silent, which it did immediately. But I still couldn't get Tania to want to continue or to cooperate with me after that. The demon had successfully influenced her and won her over and I couldn't win her back.

In another case, the person to whom I was ministering, with whom I had been on very close and friendly terms for a long time suddenly looked puzzled. It was as if she was surprised and confused by her own feelings and by what she was suddenly hearing in her head, which she took to be her own thoughts. She then said with a puzzled, surprised tone of voice, "*I'm feeling that I don't like you*".

This was said to me by a person who had been a close friend, as had her husband, and she was puzzled because she had never felt or thought that before. It was a brand new idea which the demon had planted into her mind. By way of background, let me add that she and her husband had been planning to start a business together based on providing a professional service she was qualified to give.

They had asked me for advice on setting up their business, given my own legal and business background. I had advised them that she should focus on providing the service, not on running the business, because she lacked commercial acumen and experience. I said her husband, who was an accountant, would be better suited to do the commercial work, i.e. running the business side of things. On the whole, I think I was only stating the obvious.

But when some days later we met to seek to get her delivered, she suddenly remembered this advice and formed the view that I was "*taking her husband's side*" concerning the business and she resented that. Of course, it wasn't her own thought. The demon had planted the thought in her mind and had also tried hard to stir up a sense of resentment in her emotions. Remember, demons are not only capable of whispering into your mind with thoughts. They can do the same with your emotions to influence your feelings.

It was an absurd demonic lie and it had nothing at all to do with whether she ought to let me help her to get delivered. It was just a device to create suspicion, resentment and ill will. But the point is it worked because she believed it. Therefore, she did not meet with me again. That lie was all it took to alienate her against me and the deliverance process ended there.

Then, within a short time, she and her husband left our church and we never saw them again after that. I had done nothing wrong but, yet again, a demon had succeeded in speaking into a person's mind (and their emotions) and turning them against me with skilfully told lies, getting them to distrust and resent me, and to refuse to cooperate with their deliverance.

Actually, my advice about their proposed business was sound and if I had not been seeking to help her to get rid of the demons she would have agreed with it because it was true that she had zero commercial expertise whereas her husband had plenty. She knew that perfectly well from the outset. But it suited the demon's purposes to seize upon that advice and twist it with skilful deception to create an imaginary sense of grievance.

And all this this happened even though various manifestations during the meeting had made it as clear as crystal that there was a demon inside her, just as I had told her. Nevertheless, she still did not attribute it to the demon. Instead she just felt this sudden surge of inexplicable hostility towards me, for the first time ever. Initially she didn't even know why she felt that until the demon planted the idea, a short time later, that I had been on her husband's "side" rather than hers. That then justified the hostility and made sure she cancelled the deliverance meeting.

I regret to have to say this kind of deception and sabotage is normal, so much so that it may be wise to warn the person of it in advance. Tell them that such negative, accusing, suspicious thoughts are likely to be whispered into their minds and emotions as if they were their own thoughts and feelings.

That warning might help, though it is very possible they will still believe the demon instead of you, as I have found a number of times. They are just so used to believing what they assume to be their own thoughts and feelings they can't stop, even if you warn them. The habit is just too ingrained in many people.

Remember, the demon has the great advantage of being hidden. He is also able to speak into their mind using their *own voice*, such that it seems to be the person's *own thought*. That is very often a trump card because for most people their default setting is that any thought or feeling of their own is automatically assumed to be right whereas anything said by others, including you, is to be doubted.

Don't try to persuade people to get deliverance

One thing we must *not* do is to persuade people to be delivered. At least, don't go beyond simply telling them that they need it. If they aren't interested, or don't want to repent or forgive others, or if they can't be bothered to make the time to meet up with you, or they don't want to renounce things, or change their sinful lifestyle, or if they make light of it, or seem hostile to the idea, then I would back off.

The demon will use your persistent "badgering" as a basis for accusing you of seeking to control them or to say that you are being critical of them, and so on. If you persist in seeking to persuade them of their need for deliverance where they can't already see it for themselves, it is only likely to make them disrespect you for trying too hard and it will antagonise them and increase their suspicion of you and your motives.

With such people I would just concentrate on preaching the Gospel i.e. getting them to see their need for repentance and even for salvation, because, as we saw, there is a distinct possibility that they are not saved at all. Indeed, I think there are millions of people in churches who are unsaved and were never truly converted at all.

Alternatively, it is also possible that they could be saved, barely, and yet be immature, uninformed, carnal, and demonised. In today's worldly, apostate churches it can be very hard to tell the difference between the saved and the unsaved because repentance is no longer focused on, or even mentioned, in many churches and neither is discipleship.

Sadly, many of the people you are seeking to help don't understand even the basics of Christianity and are not able to speak the same 'language' as you or to grasp what you are saying. They don't even understand the words you use because they don't know the Bible and are not on your 'wavelength'.

Therefore, as we saw, you could easily be dealing with a person who isn't even saved to begin with. If so, you will get nowhere trying to help them get delivered of their demons and you will only be wasting your time and energy and exhausting yourself. I have learned over the years only to attempt deliverance ministry with people who are:

- a) sincere in their faith – *and genuinely converted*
- b) *motivated* to change their sinful lifestyle

- c) *aware that they have demons* – i.e. they aren't denying it or ridiculing the idea
- d) genuinely wanting to *get rid* of the demons
- e) *willing* to “repent, forgive and renounce”
- f) willing, indeed *eager, to meet up* with you

If you can't put a tick in the box for **all of these things** you are very unlikely to succeed in casting out the demons and the person will just waste your time. Indeed, with such a person who doesn't want what you are offering or who doesn't believe in deliverance, or isn't willing to do what is needed, you are likely to be what Jesus called “*a prophet without honour*”.

You may recall that that is exactly what Jesus was when He was trying to preach and teach in His home town of Nazareth. Because the people knew Him as a carpenter/builder and, before that, as just a local schoolboy, they had no respect for Him and therefore didn't believe in Him, or His abilities, or show Him any honour. That is more significant than it might appear at first sight because, as Jesus found in Nazareth, even He was unable to do any “*mighty work*” there.

¹ He went away from there and came to his own country; and his disciples followed him. ² And on the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue; and many who heard him were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hands! ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. ⁴ And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.” ⁵ And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them. ⁶ And he marveled because of their unbelief.

And he went about among the villages teaching.

Mark 6:1-6 (RSV)

I will return to this theme again in a later chapter with an example of a man I was unable to help because he was the husband of a distant relative. The relationship, distant though it was, created in him a lack of respect for me, rendering me a prophet without honour. And, just like Jesus, I was unable to cast the demons out of him, even though they manifested clearly when I commanded them to go.

I reluctantly had to advise him therefore to seek help from another person. So, be aware of this problem as it is more common than you might imagine given that it is likely that the people you come across are likely to be family members, or friends, or members of your church, all of whom are likely candidates to regard you as a prophet without honour.

Indeed, when that first happened to me it caused me to review my thoughts on the idea of using visiting ministries to do the deliverance. There is the disadvantage that they don't know the person and won't be around for long to help with ongoing problems or demons which return. But, on the other hand, because they aren't known, neither will they be regarded by the people as prophets without honour. So, there are arguments both ways.

You might ask why Jesus, when not in Nazareth, didn't seem to have this problem of unrepentant, unbelieving people who didn't want to get rid of their demons. But the spiritual climate in first century Israel was utterly different from what we face now in the apostate West in the 21st century.

We live in a spiritual desert where “the heavens are brass” and even “churchgoers” don’t believe the Bible, or know what it says, let alone the wider population. Also, repentance is now an extremely scarce commodity. By contrast, Jesus walked into villages which had perhaps 20, 50, 100 or more sincere people who had already heard John the Baptist and had earnestly repented.

So, they were “ripe for harvesting” when it came to getting them delivered. It is like the difference between a farmer’s field in January, when nothing is growing and in August when the wheat is golden and ready to cut. Therefore, you must have regard to the time and place you live in, the spiritual climate you face, and the condition of people’s hearts and minds.

If you don’t see that, and aren’t realistic about it, such that you imagine you are living in first century Israel or even that this is the year AD 1870, with an overwhelmingly Christian population, you are likely to become discouraged. You may then blame yourself for the lack of success.

So, be on the lookout for sincere, penitent, motivated people who take their situation seriously, want to become mature disciples, and genuinely want your help. They are rare, but they are the people God wants you to work with because they are the only ones who can be helped.

As stated above, don’t try to persuade people to receive your help as it will only cause them to despise you and make you a “prophet without honour” in their eyes. Quite apart from demonic deception, there is something in human nature which causes people to despise and suspect anyone who is too eager to help. You therefore have to wait for the person to want your help and to ask you for it instead of you foisting it upon him uninvited.

However, let’s imagine that, against all the odds, you have come into contact with such a person who is sincere, truly wants your help and is asking for it, despite the UK, and even the USA, being a spiritual desert in comparison with how they used to be. Or, perhaps you live elsewhere in the world, where the heavens are not brass and where there is a far greater openness to the Gospel and the Bible, for example Brazil or South Korea or Argentina.

If so, what do you do now? How do you get down to the practical business of casting out the person’s demons? Let’s start now to look in the rest of this chapter and the next two chapters at what you actually need to do, and how to do it, and also at exactly what your authority is.

First, become very clear in your own mind as to what your authority is and exactly what you do, and do not, have the right to command demons to do

Unless you get it really clear in your mind as to what you can and can’t do, and where exactly are the boundaries of your authority over demons, you will never be relaxed or confident. If so, you are likely to be anxious and “on edge” and to get “caught in the headlights”. You may panic or get tongue tied or stuck as to what to do next when the demons resist you, or manifest in strange ways, or refuse to leave.

It is at such times that you need to know very clearly what you have authority to say and do and what commands you are entitled to give, so you can operate decisively and immediately with confidence and faith. It is rather like how I felt when I first put on a police uniform at the age of 21 and especially when I first wore it in public, on the streets, and dealt with real members of the public rather than just being at the Regional Training Centre.

I felt a sense of “imposter syndrome”, as all brand new constables do, and that I was just dressed up as an officer but didn’t truly feel in my heart that I was one. That problem soon disappeared however when I started to get into the job and found that people obeyed me when I spoke and even heavy lorries (trucks) immediately stopped when I raised my arm to them.

So, I grew in confidence in the police and became very conscious of who and what I was as a ‘constable’, as opposed to an ordinary citizen. I came to know exactly what my powers were - and weren’t. Therefore, I knew when I did and did not have a power of arrest, or to enter premises, or to stop and search someone, or to demand a breath test etc.

It was by having a very clear and definite knowledge of my powers that I became able to function decisively and professionally. I believe it is similar when it comes to knowing your authority as a Christian, i.e. *really knowing it* and believing it, so as to be able to exert that authority *with a confident expectation of being obeyed*.

I possibly have an advantage over some people in terms of feeling confident and being able to believe that I have authority. Firstly, I am naturally confident by my nature. Also, my working life as a policeman, then a lawyer, and also as a business owner and employer, developed my confidence further and made wielding authority and giving orders seem normal to me. I realise not everyone is like that in their nature or in their background or experience.

However, even if you are generally timid, have never employed anyone or led a team or run a business or been in charge of a project, you can still learn to be confident and train yourself to believe you have authority and to act upon it. It will just take you longer than it might take other people. But it can be done – if you want it to be and if you are determined to obey God’s Word, take His promises seriously and help His people to be set free.

Let’s look first at what the Bible says about the level of authority given to the 12 apostles, then to the 70 disciples, and subsequently to all believers from the first century to the 21st century. Then let’s look at whether we today have the same authority they had *in this specific regard* or whether our authority to cast out demons is different from, or less than, what the 12 and the 70 were authorised to do. The first passage where authority to cast out demons is referred to is in relation to the 12 apostles:

¹⁴ And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, ¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out the demons.

Mark 3:14-15 (NASB)

¹Now He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and the power to heal diseases.

Luke 9:1 (NASB)

Subsequently, Jesus also appointed and sent out the 70 disciples in addition to the 12 apostles and it would seem He gave them the same authority to cast out demons as the 12 had. This isn’t explicitly stated as clearly as I would wish. But what we do see is that when the 70 returned from their first missions trip they were rejoicing at the success they had had in casting out demons.

Evidently, they did not perceive any lack of authority to cast out demons. But zoom in on what Jesus says in verse 19 below to the 70 disciples about having given them authority to “*tread upon serpents and scorpions and upon all the power of the enemy.*” This is a metaphorical reference to demons, not

to animals at the zoo. He means He gave them authority to tread upon “*demons*”, i.e. to defeat them, not literal snakes or scorpions.

Moreover, note how Jesus says below that this authority is over “*all the power of the enemy*”. So it isn’t a narrow or feeble authority. It is a real, extensive and meaningful power. However, the fact that we can tread on all the power of the enemy doesn’t mean we can do everything. It means they can’t overpower us or hurt us and that they must obey us provided we tell them to do things we are authorised to command.

¹After this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come.

Luke 10:1 (RSV)

¹⁷ The seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” ¹⁸ And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. ²⁰ Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Luke 10:17-20 (RSV)

Moreover, it seems clear that even during Jesus’ earthly ministry, indeed at quite an early stage, there were other disciples of His who were also successfully casting out demons even though they were not part of the 12 apostles or the 70 disciples. The apostles actually objected to this at first, perhaps due to feeling jealous for their own position or maybe because they assumed it must be illegitimate if these men were not part of their own circle. But Jesus didn’t agree.

He wanted those other disciples, whoever they were, to carry on casting out demons unhindered. Therefore, these men must have been given authority to cast out demons either explicitly, by Jesus Himself saying so or, as I believe, that He was just perfectly willing for any genuine disciple of His to do so, without needing to be expressly told to. That is to say the authority was given to them automatically, by virtue of *being genuine disciples* of His:

⁴⁹ John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him, because he does not follow along with us.” ⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, “Do not hinder him; for the one who is not against you is for you.”

Luke 9:49-50 (NASB)

The most important passage, however, so far as we are concerned, is at the end of Mark 16 where Jesus speaks of what will be done in the future by “*those who have believed*”. This is an extremely broad group consisting of everyone who is saved, whenever they live, whether it be in the first century or the 21st.

This passage therefore removes all doubt, in my view, as to whether we have the same power and authority to cast out demons as was had by the 12, or the 70 or the further disciples who got on with deliverance ministry by themselves in Luke 9:49-50. We are all now explicitly empowered and authorised to do so by Jesus Himself – *provided of course we have believed*, by which He means those who are truly saved disciples of His:

¹⁵ *And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.* ¹⁶ *The one who has believed and has been baptized will be saved; but the one who has not believed will be condemned.* ¹⁷ *These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues;*

Mark 16:15-17 (NASB)

To have authority over demons you must be genuinely saved yourself and an honest, faithful disciple. Otherwise the demons will ignore you as they did the seven sons of Sceva.

This point about being truly saved, i.e. a genuine believer, is a very important qualifying condition. Being a genuine Christian is a vital prerequisite for engaging in the ministry of deliverance. Therefore, you would be wise not to simply assume the genuineness of your own repentance and faith without having first examined and tested yourself as Paul advises us all to do, to see whether you really are in the faith.

That is essential because an awful lot of people are not really genuine. And I imagine the proportion of such false, insincere, ignorant, misinformed, unrepentant “churchgoers” is a lot higher today in the West than it was in the first century when Paul gave the warning:

⁵ *Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!*

2 Corinthians 13:5 (ESV)

We see an example of this in Acts 19 where seven Jewish men, “the sons of Sceva”, attempt to cast out a demon from a man after having seen apostle Paul doing so. However, they were unsuccessful. Moreover, the demonised man turned on them and attacked them, giving all seven of them a beating. Let’s look at the passage and then examine why they failed:

¹¹ *And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,* ¹² *so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.* ¹³ *Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.”* ¹⁴ *Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this.* ¹⁵ *But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?”* ¹⁶ *And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, mastered all of them, and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.* ¹⁷ *And this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks; and fear fell upon them all; and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled.*

Acts 19:11-17 (RSV)

These seven sons of Sceva are specifically mentioned. However, they were part of a wider group of Jews who were travelling about seeking to cast out demons from people. But look closely at verse 13 above to see how they went about it. They used the name of Jesus Christ, as they had obviously heard Paul doing, but the problem was they were not doing this on the basis of *their own personal relationship with Jesus*.

Instead, they spoke in a way which was one step removed from that by saying to the demons “....*We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.*” So, the first part of that sentence is alright. They used the

word ‘adjure’ which is a legal expression meaning to give a solemn command as one might do in court when a witness is put under oath and therefore required to respond or face punishment.

You may recall Jesus remained silent at His trial and refused to answer until His interrogators adjured Him, i.e. put Him under a duty to reply. But the problem here is that although they correctly referred to the name of Jesus, to make Him their authority and their basis for having the right to command the demons, they spoke of Jesus being the person *whom Paul preaches*.

That phrase clearly implies *they did not personally know Jesus themselves* and were only imitating Paul, and using his words, but without being, in their own right, disciples of Jesus with the consequent entitlement to call upon His name or to issue commands in His name. This was not just a pedantic technical quibble about their precise use of words. It had real significance.

In particular, it meant the demons did not have to obey their commands because although they used the name of Jesus, they did so *without having the right to use it* because they themselves were not His disciples and were not saved, i.e. they did not genuinely believe in Him *for themselves*. They were effectively seeking to exert authority by proxy, based on Paul’s relationship with Jesus, rather than having that relationship and authority themselves.

The lesson which emerges from this is that we must have a genuine faith of our own, be genuinely repentant, and have been genuinely saved before we can use the name of Jesus. His name is not a “magic word” like ‘abracadabra’ as a magician might say, such that anyone who knows the magic word can use it to do magic.

It is not the name of Jesus in itself, produced by the passage of air through your vocal chords, which contains the authority and power. It is the use of that name ***by a person who has the right to use it*** by virtue of truly being His disciple, not by someone who just says religious phrases like a parrot.

If you are not His disciple and are not truly repentant, with a genuine saving faith of your own, then the demons would have every right to ignore you and to laugh in your face when you try to give them commands. It would be like you standing in the road, in civilian clothes, and raising your arm to stop the traffic.

The cars and lorries would be entirely within their rights to drive past you and ignore your raised arm – and they would be committing no offence legally, because you are not wearing the uniform of a police officer. It is the uniform, and what it signifies, that gives you the authority, not your raised arm in itself. The uniform signifies in law that you are operating in the name of King Charles III and have all of his authority, such that you must be obeyed.

Just as you can’t stop the traffic without being a genuine police officer in uniform, you can’t command demons to depart unless you are a genuine, repentant, faithful, saved disciple of Jesus Christ. Anyone who is not those things has no right to speak or act in His name and the demons have no duty to obey. And they know that, even if you don’t, because demons are arch legalists, like barrack room lawyers, who know all their rights and insist on having them.

If you aren't truly saved or if you are a carnal, worldly, insincere disciple, the demons will know that, even if you don't.

So, if you aren't genuinely saved, the demons will know that, even if you don't. Therefore, don't be like the seven sons of Sceva. Examine yourself to see whether you are genuine or phoney. Ask yourself, *"Was I truly converted? Did I truly repent? What exactly was the Gospel message that I believed and did I really believe it?"* And don't just treat these questions glibly as if they were a formality. Take it seriously and be very frank and honest about yourself.

A good way of doing this would be to read my Book 1 on *"How to Become a Christian"*. It is quite hard hitting and sobering and pulls no punches in explaining the real Gospel – something which multitudes of 21st century churchgoers have never even heard, let alone believed.

But see also my Book 2 on *"Growing in the Character of a Disciple"* because I think your authority does not only depend on whether you were genuinely converted and are *saved*, i.e. 'justified'. It also depends on whether you have, since your conversion, been operating as a sincere, earnest, wholehearted *disciple* of Jesus Christ and are growing in character, becoming 'sanctified' and seeing real changes in your lifestyle and conduct.

If instead you are watching pornographic films, fiddling your taxes, stealing from your employer, carrying on an extra marital affair, or sleeping with your girlfriend, please don't imagine you can operate with authority in reliance on Jesus' name. A phoney disciple is just as unqualified as a phoney convert - and the demons will make no mistakes and overlook no detail in weighing you up and deciding whether you are real or phoney and whether they have to obey you or not.

It would be like a real police officer who steps into the road but without being in uniform. He himself might be a real officer but, as far as the motorists are concerned, he doesn't look like one and so they are perfectly entitled to ignore him and drive on. My point is the quality of your discipleship and the extent to which you are sincerely obeying God, learning His Word and growing in Christian character, is your 'uniform'. So, we could be saved, but not properly 'dressed' as we are not living right or acting like a genuine disciple.

Let me give another analogy from the world of policing. Imagine you were a constable and were dealing with a criminal but he had video evidence of you taking a bribe, or selling drugs, or committing some other crime. And imagine you knew he had that video evidence about you and could use it at any time. What do you think that would do to:

- a) your confidence in handling him
- b) your authority to give commands
- c) his willingness to obey you?

I can't speak from personal experience of this, I hasten to add, but if I had ever been in that situation it would have crippled me and robbed me of all confidence, authority and credibility. I would have felt disqualified and powerless and the criminal would have felt able to use their knowledge of my hypocrisy to silence me, render me passive and stop me doing my job. On top of all that they would have laughed in my face if I had tried to speak to them of their crimes or exercise authority over them.

Can you see therefore how the same applies when you are dealing with demons but where you yourself are a hypocrite, not living a godly life and just keeping up appearances while engaging in secret sin? Remember, the demons know all about you so you have no secrets from them. You may be able to fool everyone at church, but you can't fool the demons. They know exactly what you are.

They know if you are a phoney, a charlatan or a hypocrite and will use that against you without hesitation. So, make sure they "have nothing on you" and that by humbling yourself, cultivating the fear of the LORD and growing in the love of the truth, you keep yourself pure and faithful and avoid all serious sin.

An example from my own life of how being utterly sincere and honest protected me from demonic power

An incident from my own life might help to illustrate this point about how demons see right through us and know whether we are genuine or phoney, saved or unsaved, honest or dishonest, although this story does not relate directly to deliverance ministry. I refer to events which occurred in 1998 when a visiting leader came to the UK from Chile.

He was promoting a message which was very popular at the time at least in charismatic churches, i.e. the "Toronto blessing" as it was called. People fell down backwards and were 'sparked out', i.e. made unconscious by what he alleged was the Holy Spirit, but which I came to believe was actually a demon. Indeed, I believe the whole experience was false, at least when it was conducted by him.

I was in a quite large charismatic church at the time and this man came for a one week visit, preaching on several nights of the week at our church and other churches. I volunteered to be his chauffeur all week and so I got to see him at very close quarters and became able to assess his character. In every meeting he asked people to stand and then he literally blew on the audience, as if blowing out candles on a birthday cake.

When he did this people fell down like skittles in a bowling alley and were rendered unconscious. There is no doubt at all in my mind that this was really happening and that it was supernatural. The people did not decide to fall down or put themselves on the floor. They were literally knocked backwards and I saw it with my own eyes many times.

It was not faked. They were being pole axed as if they had been tackled by a rugby player. This was happening each night to people in front of me, behind me, to the left of me and to the right of me. Sometimes whole rows of people fell to the floor, all at once, but never me. I was the exception and always remained standing, totally unaffected.

Indeed, this actually irritated the man from Chile and eventually he came up to me and placed himself between the congregation and me so they would not see what he did. He then put his hands on me and physically pushed me backwards, very firmly, seeking (unsuccessfully) to force me to fall over. But I wasn't having any of that pretence.

I saw immediately that he was trying to make it appear that I had fallen over, so as to impress the audience, and that he was embarrassed that his "powers" didn't work on me. As he saw it, I was spoiling the 'show' like a person who can't be hypnotised by a stage hypnotist.

It wasn't that I was trying to resist him as such, but rather that I was not willing to pretend anything, or to be a party to any pretence on his part. I simply asked God only to allow anything to happen to me if it was genuinely from Him but not if it wasn't. And God answered my sincere prayer by making me totally immune to the man's supernatural (demonic) power.

Various further facts then emerged over the following days which caused me to conclude this man was false. I became aware of him making amorous advances to women (despite him having a wife back in Chile). He was also dishonest, manipulative and scheming, used people blatantly, and was utterly ungrateful to those who helped him. In short, he was a charlatan and a deceiver.

But there is no denying the fact that he wielded real supernatural power and did extraordinary things which I have never seen done, before or since. The problem is that, as I came to realise, the power he was displaying came from demons, not from the Holy Spirit. Why then was I completely immune to this? Why did I never fall over or succumb in any way to his supernatural powers?

I believe it was simply because, unlike most of the people in the churches he visited, *I was totally sincere*. I had what the Bible calls "*the love of the truth*", which means you want to know the truth, and tell the truth, whether it suits you or not, and even if it puts you in the wrong, loses you money, or makes people think less of you.

I also had the *fear of the LORD*, i.e. a feeling of intense reverence towards God, including fearing His judgment, which is why I was not willing to be a party to any deception or play acting. I only wanted what was truly from God and I did not depart from that stance, even when I was left as the only person standing.

This actually caused some people to feel sorry for me, or perhaps to feel superior to me, and to assume there must be something wrong with me which prevented me receiving the Toronto "blessing". But I was not influenced by what people thought of me. All I cared about was what God thought of it and whether He wanted me to have it.

The point I am making is I was protected from harm and rendered immune to demonic power *by my sincerity*. It wasn't that I was a great genius or a hero. I was simply honest, genuine and entirely without guile, pretence or willingness to compromise over the truth.

That protected me, as indeed one would expect it to, because if you look at the "armour of God" listed in Ephesians 6 (as discussed in my Book 7) you will see that they are all essentially about your *character* i.e. whether you are truthful, faithful, righteous and hopeful. Those character traits when practised and maintained in your life become your protection.

Exactly the same applies when you engage in deliverance ministry. Your sincerity, faithfulness, hopefulness, righteousness and complete absence of hypocrisy, will prevent the demons being able to get at you, as there are no "chinks in your armour". Therefore, be such a person. Be totally honest. Live righteously. Be faithful. Have no hypocrisy at all in your life. If you do all that you will be immune to what happened to the seven sons of Sceva.

What authority, if any, do we have to tell demons what to do, or where to go, other than simply casting them out?

You may come across people who refer to themselves as “*sending demons to the abyss*” or use such phrases as “*sending the demon to the pit of Hell*”. The problem is I don’t believe these phrases are biblical and I see no basis for thinking we have authority to do any of these things. What I see modelled in Scripture is that we have authority to:

- a) cast the demon out
- b) command it to be silent
- c) forbid it to return to the person – but only in the case of a child, not an adult

As far as I can see, that’s all we can do, although in my opinion, *that is a lot of authority* and suffices to deal with the majority of situations we will face. So, I am not belittling our authority. I think it is *enough for what we are called to do*, though not for all the *other things the Bible never tells us to do*, which people have invented, such as sending demons to Hell or to the abyss.

Concerning that last point, we see no example anywhere in the New Testament of either Jesus or the apostles sending demons to Hell or to the abyss. Hell (Hades or Sheol) is for unsaved human beings, not demons. It is where the unsaved go when they die to await the Great White Throne Judgment, after which they will be sent to the Lake of Fire (Gehenna).

So, there are no demons in Hell, and never have been any. Moreover, there never will be any. At the very end, after the Millennium, the demons and Satan will be sent to the Lake of Fire (Gehenna) but they will never go to Hell, either then or beforehand. Therefore, if God Himself has no intention of ever sending demons to Hell, how can you possibly think you could send them there?

No such power is ever granted to you in the Bible and it is unhelpful to imagine you have such a power when you don’t. You would only be deceiving yourself. All you can do is cast the demon out of the person. Where the demon then chooses to go is up to the demon and is not for you to decide. The only exception to that would be to forbid it to return, but even then, only in the case of a child.

The Bible does speak of a particular group of demons having been sent to a place called ‘*Tartarus*’ where they are detained. But that was something which God did, not the apostles or any of us. So that too is outside the scope of our authority. Likewise, at the start of the Millennium until shortly before its end, Satan and his demons will be bound in chains so they cannot exert their influence on people during the Millennium, until they are released just before the end and are permitted one last chance to deceive people.

Amazingly, even in those idyllic circumstances, with Jesus visibly reigning on the Earth, many people will still choose to follow the demons and to rebel against Jesus. However, that chaining up of Satan and his demons is something which God Himself will do and there is absolutely no suggestion that we have any authority to put them in chains.

We can, of course, ask God to bind a demon or to restrict its actions, so that He is doing it, not us, and in ways which we do not have power to give commands about. That would be perfectly valid but, the crucial distinction is that would be *God doing it, not you*, and it would not have anything to do with your own authority.

I don't want to sound like a party pooper by listing all sorts of things which you don't have authority to do. But I think it is important to know the exact limits of your actual powers so you don't make a fool of yourself, or even just frustrate yourself, by giving orders to demons which they have no duty to obey.

As with being a constable on foot patrol, you are far better off not trying to exercise powers which you don't possess. Therefore, wherever you know that you don't personally have power or authority, then by all means ask God to intervene and to help you, just as a police officer would get on his radio to seek "back up". That is perfectly legitimate but in that case it is about God's power, not yours.

What about asking demons questions or telling them to reveal their 'names'? Can we do that?

You often hear people speaking about how they obtained information from the demon about what sort of demon it is, when and how it came in, what its name is and so on. I personally see no precedent in the Bible for asking such questions or for believing we have any authority to command demons to answer such questions.

In any event, given that all demons are absolute liars, what would be the point of asking them any questions at all? They would only lie to you and any supposed information you derive from them would be worthless at best and, more likely, would lead you astray or waste your time and energy on wild goose chases.

Therefore, I never ask any questions to demons. The only speech I ever have with a demon is either to command them to leave the person or to command them to be silent. That is all I see modelled in Scripture and those are also the only things that make any sense.

What I do believe in, however, is speaking to *the demonised person, not the demon*, and asking the person how they are feeling, whether they are aware of anything happening in their body, and what thoughts are coming into their minds. By asking questions such as those, which are legitimate and potentially useful, you are not speaking directly to the demon.

However, you may well get some indirect insight into what the demon is doing inside the person and also what lies the demon is telling them. It is important and useful to know these things because it helps you to protect the person from being lied to and it also gives you, albeit indirectly, some indication of what the demon is saying and doing and what tricks they are trying to play to avoid being cast out.

In particular, it will alert you to any lies which the demon is telling the person because it is during the deliverance meeting or the preparatory meetings that they will tell the most lies, seeking to get the person not to cooperate and not to trust you.

You might think I am making a pedantic distinction by saying I am not willing to ask questions of a demon, or to engage it in a conversation, while saying that I am willing to ask a *person* questions about what the demon seems to be *doing and saying to them*. But it isn't pedantic. In the one case you would be speaking *to* the demon. In the other you would be speaking *about* it.

It is therefore an important and valid distinction and makes perfect sense, giving you a source of information about what the demon is saying and doing, yet without giving it the undeserved honour of engaging it in conversation or taking the risk of being deceived by it or being used to deceive others.

On the issue of asking the demon for its name, which many people do, that is not a biblical practice. It originates with Jewish exorcists in the Old Testament period who engaged in deliverance ministry even before Jesus did so. They did that because they believed it was important to know the demon's name. But I believe they were mistaken. Above all, their approach did not come from the Bible and it gives no support for asking such questions.

Their belief was that in order to have the authority to cast the demon out they needed to obtain the demon's name and, thereby, also to gain some indication of when, how and why the demon entered the person. But the alleged requirement to know all that is just a man made idea with no biblical authority. Thus, there is absolutely no reason why we should copy what those men did. We are far better advised to imitate what we see Jesus and the apostles doing and to be very wary of copying anybody else.

What about “binding” demons? Can we do that?

There are two main passages upon which this idea of binding demons is based. I will look at each of these but then I will challenge the interpretation which many people have given to the word ‘bind’ and ask what we are actually authorised to do, if indeed anything. The first verse is Mark 3:27 but I will place it within its wider passage for context.

²² The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.” ²³ And so He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables: “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! ²⁷ But no one can enter the strong man’s house and plunder his property unless he first ties up the strong man, and then he will plunder his house.

²⁸ “Truly I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons and daughters of men, and whatever blasphemies they commit; ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— ³⁰ because they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Mark 3:22-30 (NASB)

What people argue is that because Jesus refers in verse 27 to the need to “bind the strong man” that must mean He is telling us to do that, in the sense of binding demons, so we can “plunder the house”. But that is not what Jesus is talking about. The whole passage is about the “unpardonable sin” or the “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit”. That is what Jesus is referring to, not teaching us how to go about deliverance ministry.

In short, the Jewish leaders were accusing Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Satan, thereby slandering the Holy Spirit who was the actual source of His power. So, the unpardonable sin was committed by the Jewish leaders of that generation, because of that slander of attributing to Satan what the Holy Spirit was doing.

Verse 27 isn't speaking about us, and it is not talking about how to do deliverance in any case. Therefore, it is not a basis for claiming you have a power to “bind demons”. You do not. At any rate, Mark 3:27 confers no such power upon us.

The other passage which people rely upon to claim we have the power to bind demons is from Matthew 16:29 which refers to Peter being given authority to bind and loose.

¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

Matthew 16:18-19 (NASB)

This incident occurred at Caesarea Philippi where Peter was given the revelation that Jesus was the Son of God. The reference to binding and loosing is quite complicated and requires some explaining and I deal with it in detail in my audio series of sermons on Matthew’s gospel. However, let it suffice to say for our purposes here, that these verses above are nothing to do with binding demons.

They are not about taking authority over them or issuing commands to them or “paralysing” them or effectively placing them under arrest. The verses don’t mean any of that. They refer to power given to Peter at the start of the Church age to loose (i.e. to permit) the Gospel to go to Samaria and also on to the whole Gentile world. It is also about speaking authoritatively about the formulation of doctrine. But it isn’t anything to do with demons and grants us no powers at all.

I’m conscious that the things I am saying may be a disappointment to some as they might be under the impression that the ministry of deliverance involves the wielding of ‘magical’ supernatural powers, as if we were a Christian version of Gandalf the wizard from The Lord of the Rings. Some might think I am being negative or taking all the excitement out of deliverance.

But it isn’t meant to be exciting, just as extracting a tumour from someone’s body isn’t supposed to be exciting or a game of sport to be enjoyed. It is meant to be a serious ministry where we help other people to be set free. It is not about our own entertainment or about impressing others with our dazzling powers over demons.

If in your heart you are hoping to impress people or to be admired then you aren’t mature enough yet to get into this ministry and ought to wait for a while. At any rate, whether I am a disappointment or not, my goal is just to tell you the truth as best as I can on every issue.